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### **The ON/OFF button for Human Rights**

While changing focus from the top to the bottom of the blank sheet of paper lying before me, loads of images raced in my head. These were thoughts summoning pictures of kids starving, public shootings, huts in shatters and lots of other horrendous images. However, only then, while heroically tackling issues that concern Human Rights I became aware of the reality: I was sitting in my comfortable armchair that I have recently bought from IKEA with money that sources from the exact same family pocket that lets me live in a cosy house, attend a private school and provide with very high standards of living and I realized that all this time I took my rights and privileges for granted. Not a second had it crossed my mind what my life would have been without having the right to education, to an adequate standard of living, to freedom of expression, thus resembling the skinny starving child.

Having grasped the true dimension of my situation was only due to this competition, which led me to the following epiphany: I have lost the value of what everyone would agree is what a human being treasures most: his basic rights and liberties. So, instead of creating absurd, out-of-reach plans of protecting Human Rights, I decided to find the pragmatic way of treating the matter.

Up until now, my unconscious state of welfare could be described as a passive position facing the incoming waves of news: genocides, religiously based oppression, extreme poverty and the list is endless. My perception of the information had been similar to a phlegmatic “today died another few guys” view. Nonetheless, growing conscious of the reality means changing the passivity into active reasoning. This means responding to a certain massacre with a passionate “today, a thousand souls were taken away! what is the cause and what are the consequences?” On the other hand, it also means to be physically involved and maybe join an NGO or any other voluntary organization that supports the problems that you had witnessed.

However, personal change is not my only target. Helping other people understand that they too, should be active is also important because one cannot do anything alone. So, my second role is to distribute the information related to human rights abuses and with it, try pressing the ON/OFF button that can change people's passive form to an active one. Triggering their interest for the subject, letting them realize that they benefit from rights that ought-to-be-equal people do not have and convincing them to act accordingly, is equally necessary.

As a student, I think these are the main points that are to be achieved when dealing with the issue of Human Rights, but the turning point for everyone should be realizing a change inside themselves. It is hard, I admit, but I for one, find much strength in Gandhi's wise words: “Whatever you do will be insignificant, but it is very important that you do it”.